

ISTEP+ Performance Level Descriptors

English/Language Arts – Grade 8

Grade 8

Pass+

Pass+ students demonstrate advanced understanding when reading, analyzing, synthesizing, drawing conclusions, and responding to grade-level appropriate fiction and nonfiction text, including genres from previous grade levels. Students use their knowledge of word parts and context clues to demonstrate advanced understanding of figurative language, unknown text-based words, and content-specific vocabulary. *Pass+* students display advanced writing skills using appropriate standard English conventions when producing different writing forms, including those introduced in previous grade levels and responses to literature. Writing also includes appropriate word choice, tone, and style.

Examples of specific knowledge, skills, and abilities for Grade 8 students scoring at the *Pass+* level include:

- Evaluate the logic, consistencies, and patterns within a text
- Support reasonable statements with text-based examples
- Compare and contrast literary characters from different time periods
- Support the main idea of a well-organized essay using quotations and opinions
- Write short stories that include clear description, action, and well-developed characters
- Use precise words to make writing interesting
- Adjust writing style and tone as appropriate to the audience

Grade 8

Pass

Pass students demonstrate proficient understanding when reading, analyzing, synthesizing, drawing conclusions, and responding to grade-level appropriate fiction and nonfiction text, including genres from previous grade levels. Students use their knowledge of word parts and context clues to demonstrate an adequate understanding of figurative language, unknown text-based words, and content-specific vocabulary. *Pass* students display satisfactory writing skills using appropriate standard English conventions when producing different writing forms, including those introduced in previous grade levels and responses to literature. Writing also includes mostly appropriate word choice, tone, and style.

Examples of specific knowledge, skills, and abilities for Grade 8 students scoring at the *Pass* level include:

- Analyze recurring themes within a text
- Differentiate between *limited* (narrator does not know all thoughts of all characters) and *omniscient* (narrator knows all thoughts of all characters) points of view
- Understand the structure, format, and purpose of informational documents
- Make reasonable statements and draw conclusions about a text
- Recognize the importance of setting, plot structure and development
- Write compositions with clearly-stated topics and well-supported conclusions
- Write for different purposes and to specific audiences

Grade 8

Did Not Pass

Did Not Pass students demonstrate limited understanding when reading, analyzing, synthesizing, drawing conclusions, and responding to grade-level appropriate fiction and nonfiction text, including genres from previous grade levels. Students demonstrate a partial understanding of figurative language, unknown text-based words, and content-specific vocabulary. *Did Not Pass* students display limited writing skills using few appropriate standard English conventions when producing different writing forms, including those introduced in previous grade levels and responses to literature. Writing lacks appropriate word choice, tone, and style.

Examples of specific knowledge, skills, and abilities for Grade 8 students scoring at the *Do Not Pass* level include:

- Identify the differences between first and third person points of view
- Write using simple and compound sentences
- Use correct capitalization, punctuation, and spelling conventions

- Write for different purposes and audiences using appropriate tone and writing style
- Write simple sentences containing correct capitalization
- Recognize parts of speech, including nouns, verbs, and conjunctions